

these pages, and it will occur to many as the chief one—the equality of the treatment throughout. Undoubtedly certain chapters, such as the fourth, containing the introduction to the comparative survey of the groups of Fungi, will strike one as eminently impressive and of special value; but from the nature of the subject and the necessary method of treatment, this follows as a matter of course. The intimate knowledge and unrelaxed grasp of detail is equal throughout, and inspires both confidence and admiration in one who seeks it for guidance through conflicting theories and obscure facts.

GEORGE MURRAY.

Our Insect Allies. By THEODORE WOOD. Small 8vo. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge: London, 1884.

WE have heard so much in times gone by of “insect enemies” that it is refreshing to find an author who is willing to be an advocate on the other side. Mr. Wood, indeed, in the little work before us, is, perhaps, inclined to go a little too far, and now and then unduly magnifies the possible benefits that we may receive from insects. But this is excusable in an advocate, and it has the further advantage of enabling the author to make his book much more of a general introduction to the study of entomology than it could otherwise have been. As a sketch of the history of some of the commoner insects it is well suited to foster a taste for entomology in young people, and will guide them safely in their earliest steps. Indeed, in one respect especially, it takes ground that we are glad to see occupied, for while starting as a description of some of the insect allies of man, its goes directly against that old-fashioned line of thought which is so common, in which every thing is measured from the human point of view. Mr. Wood, on the contrary, points out to his readers that the insects of which we complain as destroying or injuring our property have an existence quite independent of us, and that it is only what he terms the “unnatural conditions” introduced by civilization that have converted most of them into recognizable enemies.

The little book is pleasantly written and illustrated with numerous woodcuts, many of them pretty good, while others are certainly very poor.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Note on the Occurrence of some rare Foraminifera in the Irish Sea.
By CHARLES ELCOCK.

LAST spring I obtained a dredging of about four pounds of very tenacious mud from a point south-west of the Isle of Man, depth

70 to 75 fathoms. After careful washing I found it contained a considerable number of that rare Rhizopod, *Technitella legumen*, Norman. The tests are in very fair condition, but through over-washing many are broken up, and none were found with the coating of sand or mud which sometimes covers them. A very good figure of this Foraminifer was given in this magazine in 1878, and one with the arenaceous coating is given in the 'Challenger' Report, vol. ix. plate xxv.

Fragments of a spicular test have been found by me in three or four other dredgings from the Irish Sea, but this is the first instance in which perfect tests have occurred. I should be glad to learn whether any other observer has obtained it in Irish waters.

The same dredging also contained a number of the very rare *Lagena Hertwigiana*, Brady, of which a figure is given in the 'Challenger' Report, vol. ix. plate lviii., and description at p. 470. This makes the fourth locality from which this *Lagena* has been obtained, the depths at which the others occurred being respectively 155 fathoms (Raine Island), 2600 fathoms (south of Australia), and 150 to 200 fathoms (near Bergen, Norway). Very fine examples of *Hyperammia elongata*, *Reophax scorpiurus*, and *Haplophragmium pseudospirale* were common.

I may add that examples were submitted for confirmation to my friend H. B. Brady, who unhesitatingly identified them as named.

19 Hughenden Avenue, Belfast,
October 18, 1884.

On the Occurrence of a Process resembling Copulation in Comatula mediterranea. By Dr. C. F. JICKELL.

While I was occupied with this organism in the Zoological Institute at Graz I observed a process which, like that described by H. Ludwig in *Asterina gibbosa**, showed the closest resemblance to a copulation, and which I will here communicate, as the statements of this nature with regard to Echinoderms seem to me to be very scanty.

Two specimens of this *Comatula*, which were observed for several days in a large aquarium, were found one morning seated close together, with the arms closely entwined. In the evening of the same day, therefore about twelve hours after the discovery of this condition of things, the two individuals were still united; but on the following morning, or twenty-four hours after the first observation, the union was dissolved.

Another still less expected process now commenced. The arms fell off simultaneously with the separation of the pinnales, and

* Zeitschr. f. wiss. Zool. Bd. xxxvii.